

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

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FM AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9964

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OGEN, SCUL, DR

SUBJECT: "OPERATION SHOESTRING" - THE MILWAUKEE SYMPHONY

REF: SD 665

1. AS THE DEPT AWARE, WE HAVE BEEN SEEKING TO BURNISH THE U.S. CULTURAL IMAGE HERE, IN PART TO DISSIPATE LINGERING MEMORIES OF THE 1965 U.S. MILITARY EPISODE WHICH STILL RANKLES IN SOME DOMINICAN QUARTERS. THE DEPT'S SYSTEM OF PROVIDING US WITH CONSIDERABLE ADVANCE NOTICE OF CULTURAL EVENTS THAT MAY BE AVAILABLE TO US HAS BEEN HELPFUL IN THIS EFFORT. STRINGENT FUNDING LIMITATIONS, HOWEVER, HAVE HAMPERED OUR ABILITY TO ACCOMPLISH AS MUCH AS WE BELIEVE NEEDS DOING AND WE WOULD HOPE THAT FUTURE BUDGETARY ALLOCATIONS FOR CULTURAL PRESENTATIONS AT THIS POST WILL REFLECT COGNIZANCE OF THE CONTINUING NEED HERE TO IMPROVE OUR CULTURAL RELATIONS AND TO HELP TO ERASE TOTALLY THE VESTIGES OF THE 1965 AFTERMATH.

2. WHILE HOPEFULLY CONFIDENT THAT OUR NEEDS WILL BE RECOGNIZED AND THAT INCREASED FUNDS FOR CULTURAL PRESENTATIONS HERE WILL BE AVAILABLE IN THE NEXT FISCAL YEAR, WE HAVE IN THE MEANTIME BEEN PERSEVERING IN OUR PROGRAM OF SEEING WHAT WE COULD DO WITHOUT USG FUNDS BY DRAWING UPON GODR ASSETS AS WELL AS UPON DOMINICAN AND U.S. PRIVATE RESOURCES. WE ARE PLEASED TO REPORT THAT THANKS TO MULTIPLE COOPERATIVE EFFORTS, INCLUDING THE DEPT'S FACILITATIVE ASSISTANCE, WRITTEN AGREEMENT HAS BEEN REACHED BETWEEN THE MILWAUKEE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

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AND DOMINICAN ENTITIES TO GIVE TWO CONCERTS IN SANTO DOMINGO

ON MARCH 19 AND 20 RESPECTIVELY. AS PREVIOUSLY REPORTED THE FIRST CONCERT WILL BE A NO-ADMISSION-CHARGE "POPS- CONCERT AT THE NEWLY-CONSTRUCTED PALACIO DE DEPORTES THE SEATING CAPACITY OF WHICH IS ABOUT TEN THOUSAND. THE SECOND WILL BE A GALA PERFORMANCE AT THE TEATRO NACIONAL FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE CENTRO DE REHABILITACION, AN EXCELLENT LOCAL CHARITY DEDICATED TO CHILD REHABILITATION. PRESIDENT BALAGUER HAS AGREED TO ATTEND THIS PERFORMANCE.

3. THE FINANCING OF THIS MAJOR UNDERTAKING IS AS FOLLOWS: THE MILWAUKEE SYMPHONY HAS AGREED TO WAIVE ITS USUAL FEE OF \$5,500 PER CONCERT; THE GODR WILL PROVIDE AN AIRCRAFT FREE OF CHARGE TO TRANSPORT THE ONE HUNDRED AND THREE PERSONS INVOLVED, THEIR INSTRUMENTS AND BAGGAGE FROM MILWAUKEE TO SANTO DOMINGO AND RETURN; THE USE OF THE PALACIO DE DEPORTES AND TEATRO NACIONAL WILL BE DONATED BY THE GODR; THE EMBAJADOR HOTEL WILL PROVIDE LODGING FOR ALL AT REDUCED RATES; THE HOTEL BILL AND \$13.75 PER DIEM PER PERSON WILL BE MET BY DONATIONS OF \$4,000 EQUALLY DIVIDED BETWEEN THE LOCAL AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND THE GULF AND WESTERN FOUNDATION (BOTH OF WHOM HAVE BEEN PERSUADED TO BECOME MORE ASSOCIATED WITH THE ARTS AS PART OF THEIR OWN IMAGE-BUILDING PROGRAM) AND THE BALANCE (APPROXIMATELY \$4,000) FROM DOMINICAN PRIVATE SOURCES.

4. THERE ARE SEVERAL "FIRSTS" INVOLVED. IT WILL BE THE FIRST TIME THAT THE MILWAUKEE SYMPHONY WILL HAVE PLAYED ABROAD. IT WILL BE THE FIRST TIME THAT A SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA FROM THE CONTINENTAL UNITED STATES WILL HAVE PLAYED IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC. IT WILL BE THE FIRST TIME THAT PRESIDENT BALAGUER WILL HAVE ATTENDED A FUNCTION AT THE TEATRO NACIONAL (HIS FAVORITE CREATION). AS AN ADDED ATTRACTION, CAROL NEBLETT, OPERA STAR WHO WAS RECENTLY MARRIED TO KENNETH SCHERMERHORN, CONDUCTOR OF THE MILWAUKEE, WILL SING ONE NUMBER AT THE TEATRO NACIONAL CONCERT.

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